

VZCZCXR07305
PP RUEHDBU
DE RUEHNT #0756/01 1090727
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 190727Z APR 06
FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5562
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY 7813
RUEHAA/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 1903
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 2428
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 2329
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1413
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 1734

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TASHKENT 000756

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN, USOSCE FOR GREG SLOTTA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [OSCE](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: FY06 FUNDING OF OSCE EXTRABUDGETARY PROJECTS IN UZBEKISTAN

REF: STATE 10552

¶1. (U) Summary: The OSCE website listing of extrabudgetary projects does not reflect any activities in Uzbekistan. Post recommends the USG contribute funding to the following projects that fulfill both U.S. and OSCE interests: a research grant on intellectual property rights (IPR) (USD 100,000), a summer camp on environmental education for schoolchildren (USD 10,000), and a winter camp on environmental education for youth (USD 10,000). In developing these recommendations, Post considered the possible changes to OSCE Tashkent's mandate. End summary.

¶2. (U) Per reftel guidance, the Embassy worked closely with the OSCE Mission in Tashkent to identify those projects that meet U.S. and OSCE policy goals and are the most likely to be realized in the current political environment. According to OSCE officials in Tashkent, many of the current extrabudgetary programs do not need additional funding, as the GOU has restricted its programs. Also, OSCE Tashkent six-month mandate expires in June and it is possible the new mandate will suggest a reduction in staff. With these constraints in mind, we selected two ongoing and one new project. These three projects have a high probability of being enacted as the GOU thus far has supported the environmental camps and IPR training. These projects do not require a large amount of time to organize and would not burden a reduced staff.

Research Grant on Intellectual Property Rights

¶3. (U) IPR is a problem in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan is currently on the Special 301 Watch List, and post has seen minimal progress on legislative changes in 2005. The GOU has delayed in reforming the civil, criminal and administrative codes. However, the GOU is interested in joining the WTO and has been open to projects, such as those from USAID and training provided for experts by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, to improve the IPR climate.

¶4. (U) The Antimonopoly Improvement Center (APIC) submitted a project proposal to the OSCE Mission to develop recommendations based on world &best practices.⁸ The total estimated cost of the program is USD 330,000, of which USD 30,000 in kind is financed by the GOU for office spaces and other services. These recommendations would be submitted to policy-makers to improve and enhance the protection system for intellectual property rights. The research would focus on the issues of synchronization and simplification of legislature; and the organizational structure of the

regulative system of IPR. APIC would include actors involved in IPR, such as courts and entrepreneurs. We recommend USG funding of this research program at USD 100,000. (Note: APIC is an independent agency, established in 2003 to increase the practical orientation of research and to improve the development of normative-legal basis in consumer rights protection. APIC has worked with the Asian Development Bank, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and the German Technical Center on projects in Uzbekistan. End note.)

Summer Camp on Environmental Education for Youth

15. (U) Post recommends providing funding of USD 10,000 for OSCE 2006 summer camps focused on strengthening environmental education in schools. Sixty winners of the national school competition on environmental issues, EKO MAKTAB, will be able to participate in a series of ten-day camps in the mountains. The activities include environmental discussions, preparing an exhibition of paintings and a study trip to a nature park.

Winter Camp on Environmental Education for 15-17 year olds

16. (U) Post recommends providing funding of USD 10,000 for the OSCE 2006 winter camp focused on strengthening environmental education in schools. Forty-two winners of the national school competition on environmental issues, EKO MAKTAB, will be able to participate in a series of week-long camps in the mountains. The activities include environmental discussions, preparing an exhibition of paintings and a study trip to a nature park. Such camps reach Uzbek youth at an

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impressionable age and can expose them to independence of thought and transborder issues.

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